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## ZOOLOGY.

**The White-Fish of Lake Chapala.** — In 1879 the writer secured a single specimen of the famous "Pescado Blanco," a delicious food fish found in Lake Chapala, in Mexico. This was described under the name of *Chirostoma estor*. It is an atherinoid fish (Silversides or Pesce-rey), translucent and delicate in substance and about a foot in length. Last winter Mr. J. O. Snyder and the writer visited this lake and obtained a very large collection of the "Pescado Blanco." On critically examining it we were surprised to find that the material contained six distinct species, similar in color and appearance but differing in technical characters, and not one of them identical with the original *Chirostoma estor*. Two of these six species have been lately described by Dr. G. A. Boulenger from specimens taken by Mr. A. C. Buller, under the names of *Chirostoma lucius* and *Chirostoma sphyrcena* (*Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 1900, pp. 54, 55). These names have priority over those printed but not yet published by Jordan and Snyder.

D. S. J.

**Evermann on Species and Subspecies.** — In *Science* for March 23, Dr. B. W. Evermann gives a very sane and accurate account of the formation of species and subspecies, using two species of darters in Lake Maxinkuckee as illustrations. He closes with these words: "We sometimes hear the remark that 'systematists often go too far and describe as new species or subspecies forms which differ but slightly from known forms, that they give specific or subspecific value to differences which are due merely to slight differences in environment.' This misses the whole point. What produces species and subspecies except slight differences in environment with greater or less geographical isolation? And when we see these differences why should we refuse to admit their existence or their meaning?"

D. S. J.

**Smith on the Fishes of Woods Holl.** — In *Science* for December 15, Dr. H. M. Smith adds a number of tropical species to the list of fishes known from Woods Holl, raising the number of species to 240, the largest recorded from any Atlantic locality north of Key West. The species not hitherto recorded from north of Carolina are the following: *Muraena retifera*, *Apogon maculatus*, *Epinephelus adscensionis*, *Garrupa nigrita*, *Mycteroperca bonace*, *Mycteroperca inter-*

*stitialis* (?), *Eupomacentrus leucostictus*, *Teuthis hepatus*, *Teuthis cæruleus*, *Teuthis bahianus*, *Lactophrys triqueter*, *Chilomycterus antillarum*, *Scorpena plumieri*, and *Scorpena grandicornis*. All of these are evidently species borne northward in the Gulf Stream. D. S. J.

**Eigenmann on Blind Vertebrates.**—In *Science* for March 30, Dr. Carl H. Eigenmann publishes his address as President of the Indiana Academy of Sciences on "Degeneration of the Eyes of the Cold-Blooded Vertebrates of the North-American Caves." In this he discusses in detail the eye degeneration of the cave salamanders and cave blind-fishes. He concludes that "degeneration has not proceeded in the reverse order of development. Rather the older normal stages of ontogenetic development have been modified into the more recent phyletic stages through which the eye has passed. The adult degenerate eye is not an arrested ontogenetic stage of development but a new adaptation, and there is an attempt in ontogeny to reach the degenerate adult condition in the most direct way possible." D. S. J.

**Microbdella biannulata.**—Under this name J. Percy Moore<sup>1</sup> describes a remarkable leech of the family Glossiphoniæ, recently discovered by him in the mountain region of North Carolina, attached to the body of the salamander *Desmognathus fusca*. Leeches of the family named have somites ordinarily composed each of three rings about equal in width. In *Microbdella*, however, a typical somite is biannulate dorsally, uniannulate ventrally. The two rings into which the somite is divided on the dorsal surface are not of equal width, the anterior one being much broader and corresponding evidently with the first and second rings of a typical somite of *Glossiphonia*. The segmental sense organs of the dorsal surface are situated in the posterior half of the broad anterior ring. The single broad ring of which the somite is composed on the ventral surface is clearly equivalent to all three rings of a somite of *Glossiphonia*.

Moore's discovery shows the correctness of two general conclusions recently announced by W. E. Castle<sup>2</sup> as a result of studies made chiefly on *Glossiphonia*:

1. The sensory ring of the leech somite is the *middle*, not the anterior ring of the somite, as has been generally assumed hitherto.

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila.*, April, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts and Sci.*, February, 1900.